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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 MOSCOW 13989

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SUBJECT: ARMENIA PURSUES INDEPENDENCE

REF: A) MOSCOW 13898 B) MOSCOW 12972 C) MOSCOW 12373
D) 90 MOSCOW 30879 E) 90 MOSCOW 32942

11. CONFIDENTIAL -- ENTIRE TEXT

SUMMARY
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12. DURING A MAY 13-16 TRIP TO ARMENIA:

--ARMENIAN OFFICIALS DESCRIBED THEIR PARTICIPATION IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE OTHER FIVE REPUBLICS EXCLUDED FROM THE NINE-PLUS-ONE DECLARATION.

--ARMENIAN SUPREME SOVIET CHAIRMAN TER-PETROSYAN (PROTECT) SAID ARMENIA INTENDED TO PURSUE INDEPENDENCE ACCORDING TO THE MECHANISMS STIPULATED BY SOVIET LAW.

--THE RESIGNATION OF ARMENIAN COMMUNIST PARTY CHIEF POGOSYAN REFLECTED THE DISILLUSIONMENT OF ARMENIAN COMMUNISTS WITH THE CPSU.

--TER-PETROSYAN DESCRIBED NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIET MILITARY TO ALLOW ARMENIAN CITIZENS TO SERVE ONLY IN ARMENIA.

13. THIS IS THE THIRD OF THREE REPORTS ON THE TRIP. THE FIRST REPORT COVERED ARMENIA'S DISPUTE WITH AZERBAIDZHAN (REF A). THE SECOND ANALYZED ARMENIA'S FOREIGN POLICY (SEPTEL). END SUMMARY.

THE SIX VERSUS THE NINE-PLUS-ONE
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14. DURING A CONVERSATION WITH POLOFFS, ARMENIAN SUPREME SOVIET CHAIRMAN LEVON TER-PETROSYAN STRESSED THAT THE APRIL 23 SO-CALLED NINE-PLUS-ONE DECLARATION WAS ONLY A TACTICAL AND PROPAGANDA STEP WITH NO REAL MEANING. TER-PETROSYAN SAID THAT KAZAKHSTAN PRESIDENT NAZARBAYEV HAD BROACHED THE IDEA ORIGINALLY IN COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATION MEETINGS EARLY THIS YEAR. THE ARMENIAN LEADER SAID GORBACHEV NEEDED SUCH AN AGREEMENT GOING INTO THE COMMUNIST PARTY PLENUM AND YEL'TSIN, AT THAT POINT, NEEDED TO SHOW HE WAS WILLING TO COMPROMISE TO SAVE THE UNION. TER-PETROSYAN ADDED THAT HE WAS ABSOLUTELY SURE THE REPUBLICS WOULD NOT SIGN THE LATEST UNION TREATY DRAFT.

15. TER-PETROSYAN OBSERVED THAT UKRAINE SPEARHEADED THE GROUP OF REPUBLICS WHICH PRESENTED THE GREATEST CHALLENGE TO THE CENTER. TER-PETROSYAN INDICATED THAT DURING THE COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATION MEETINGS, UKRAINIAN LEADER KRAVCHUK WAS THE MOST ADAMANT ABOUT REDUCING THE CENTER'S POWERS VIS-A-VIS THE CENTER. BECAUSE UKRAINE IS A VERY RICH AND POWERFUL REPUBLIC, KRAVCHUK IS SURE TO HAVE A MAJOR INFLUENCE ON THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF THE UNION TREATY NEGOTIATIONS, ACCORDING TO TER-PETROSYAN.

16. TER-PETROSYAN TOLD POLOFFS THAT SIX MONTHS AGO, MOLDAVIAN PRESIDENT MIRCHA SNEGUR INTRODUCED A PLAN FOR COOPERATION AMONG THE SIX REPUBLICS WHICH HAD NO INTENTION OF SIGNING THE UNION TREATY. THESE INCLUDE THE THREE BALTIC REPUBLICS, GEORGIA, MOLDOVA, AND ARMENIA. AT THAT TIME THESE REPUBLICS HAD A STRONG SENSE THAT THE CENTER WOULD IMPLEMENT PUNITIVE MEASURES TO KEEP THEM IN

THE UNION. ARMENIAN SUPREME SOVIET FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEMBER HOVANES IGITYAN (PROTECT) HAD JUST RETURNED FROM A TRIP TO MOLDOVA AND WAS PREPARING TO LEAVE FOR THE BALTICS THE NEXT DAY TO CONTINUE THESE DISCUSSIONS. IGITYAN IS THE WORKING-LEVEL ARMENIAN REPRESENTATIVE IN THE FORMULATION OF COUNTERMEASURES TO ANY KIND OF ECONOMIC PRESSURE THE NINE MAY TRY TO INFLICT ON THESE SIX REPUBLICS.

17. IGITYAN INDICATED THAT THESE DISCUSSIONS HAD BECOME MORE FREQUENT SINCE THE APRIL 23 SIGNING OF THE NINE-PLUS-ONE DECLARATION. HE ADDED THAT THE LEADERS OF THE SIX REPUBLICS HAD NOT YET MET BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN BUSY WITH THEIR OWN PROBLEMS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE REPUBLICS. (COMMENT: BALTIC CONTACTS HAVE TOLD US THAT BALTIC LEADERS ARE WARY OF ANY TYPE OF FORMAL AGREEMENT AMONG THE SIX BECAUSE THEY DO NOT WISH TO DILUTE THEIR ARGUMENTS FOR INDEPENDENCE BY INCLUDING REPUBLICS WHOSE INCORPORATION IS ACCEPTED BY THE WEST. END COMMENT.)

18. TER-PETROSYAN MAINTAINED THAT ANY KIND OF ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AGAINST THE SIX REPUBLICS WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO CARRY OUT BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF THE SOVIET ECONOMIC SYSTEM. HE ASSERTED THAT THE CLOSE ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF THE REPUBLICS WOULD MAKE IT VERY HARD FOR THE CENTER OR THE NINE REPUBLICS TO TAKE ACTION WITHOUT SUFFERING RETALIATION. THUS, HE CONCLUDED THAT SUCH ECONOMIC PRESSURE WOULD BACKFIRE ON THE CENTER.

A LEGAL PATH TO INDEPENDENCE /-----

19. TER-PETROSYAN OUTLINED FOR POLOFFS HIS VISION OF THE PATH TO ARMENIA'S INDEPENDENCE. FIRST, ARMENIA INTENDED TO FOLLOW THE USSR SUPREME SOVIET LAW ON SECESSION. THIS PROCESS WILL BEGIN WITH THE SEPTEMBER 21 REPUBLIC REFERENDUM ON INDEPENDENCE. SOON AFTER, ARMENIAN OFFICIALS PLAN TO HOLD REPUBLIC ELECTIONS. AFTER THE ELECTIONS, THE NEW REPUBLIC SUPREME SOVIET WILL DRAFT A NEW CONSTITUTION. FINALLY, THE REPUBLIC WILL COMPLETE THE FINAL STAGES FOR COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE FROM THE SOVIET UNION. TER-PETROSYAN AND ARMENIAN SUPREME SOVIET FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMISSION CHAIRMAN VARDANIYAN (PROTECT) COULD NOT GIVE A SPECIFIC TIME FRAME AND INDICATED THAT THE PROCESS COULD TAKE A LONG TIME. TER-PETROSYAN MAINTAINED THAT ARMENIA'S CHOICE TO FOLLOW THE LEGAL ROUTE TO INDEPENDENCE HAD UPSET THE CENTER AND THEREFORE THE CENTER EXACERBATED THE ARMENIAN-AZERBAYDZHANI DISPUTE (REF A).

ARMENIAN COMMUNISTS DISILLUSIONED /-----

110. ACCORDING TO SEVERAL ARMENIAN COMMUNIST PARTY AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, ARMENIAN COMMUNIST PARTY CHIEF STEFAN POGOSYAN RESIGNED ON MAY 13 BECAUSE HE REFUSED TO COLLUDE WITH THE CENTER AGAINST THE ARMENIANS. LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL SERZHIK DOVLADBEGYAN (PROTECT) TOLD POLOFFS POGOSYAN HAD RESIGNED BECAUSE HE HAD BEEN ASKED TO FORM A NATIONAL SALVATION COMMITTEE IN ARMENIA TO WORK AGAINST THE ARMENIAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT. KAMU KOCHARYAN (PROTECT), ANOTHER LOCAL OFFICIAL, SAID POGOSYAN RESIGNED BECAUSE "HE DID NOT WANT TO BETRAY HIS PEOPLE." OTHER OFFICIALS TOLD US THE LAST STRAW FOR POGOSYAN WAS WHEN HE ASKED GORBACHEV FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE DEPORTATION OF GETASHEN AND MARTUNASHEN (REF A) AND WAS REFUSED.

111. DZHEMA ANANYAN (PROTECT), FORMERLY A VERY ACTIVE ARMENIAN COMMUNIST PARTY ACTIVIST AND MEMBER OF THE USSR CPSU CONTROL COMMISSION, EMBODIED THE BITTERNESS LOCAL COMMUNISTS FEEL TOWARD THE CPSU AND THE CENTER. RUBEN SHUGAROV (PROTECT), AN ARMENIAN SUPREME SOVIET STAFFER, TOLD POLOFFS THAT ANANYAN HAD BEEN A STRONG COMMUNIST PARTY STALWART IN ARMENIA AND HAS SPENT MOST OF HER

CAREER ESPOUSING COMMUNIST PARTY IDEOLOGY AND IDEALS.

¶12. WHEN POLOFFS MET ANANYAN ON MAY 15 IN HER OFFICE IN THE ARMENIAN BORDER CITY OF IDZHEVAN, SHE EXUDED BITTERNESS AND DISGUST TOWARD THE CENTER AND THE CPSU. SHE ACCUSED THE CENTER OF CONDUCTING "A CAMPAIGN OF STATE TERROR AGAINST THE ARMENIANS." SHE ADDED, "I HAVE BEEN A LOYAL AND DEDICATED COMMUNIST PARTY OFFICIAL FOR 40 YEARS AND THIS IS HOW THEY TREAT US|" SHE SHOWED POLOFFS A COPY OF HER PUBLISHED STATEMENT IN WHICH SHE RESIGNED FROM THE CPSU CONTROL COMMISSION AND AIRED HER DISGUST WITH THE CENTER'S SUPPORT OF AZERBAYDZHAN AND THE SHELLING OF VILLAGES ALONG THE ARMENIAN-AZERBAYDZHANI BORDER. SHE ALSO REFLECTED THAT "IT IS STRANGE THAT THEY WOULD GIVE THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE TO A MAN WHO WOULD CONDUCT THIS KIND OF TERROR CAMPAIGN."

ARMENIAN DRAFTEES TO SERVE ONLY IN ARMENIA?

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¶13. TER-PETROSYAN SAID ARMENIAN OFFICIALS ARE ENGAGED IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIET ARMY OVER THE STATUS OF ARMENIA'S DRAFTEES AND WHERE THEY WILL SERVE. ACCORDING TO THE DRAFT AGREEMENT WITH THE SOVIET ARMY, ARMENIA WOULD CONCLUDE ITS OWN AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER REPUBLICS ABOUT WHERE SOLDIERS WOULD SERVE. TER-PETROSYAN SAID THEY WERE IN THE PROCESS OF CONCLUDING SUCH AN AGREEMENT WITH LITHUANIA, FOR EXAMPLE. THE ARMENIAN LEADER SAID THE PLAN HAS THE BLESSING OF USSR DEFENSE MINISTER YAZOV AND ONE OF HIS DEPUTIES, WHO HAS JUST BEEN IN ARMENIA TO FINALIZE THE AGREEMENT. TER-PETROSYAN SAID THAT ARMENIA WAS PARTICULARLY ANXIOUS TO SETTLE THIS ISSUE, PARTICULARLY GIVEN THEIR HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE WITH RUSSIAN TROOPS. HE SAID THAT IN 1918 AND 1942, RUSSIAN SOLDIERS HAD ABANDONED ARMENIA TO THE ENEMY AND HAD NOT DEFENDED THE REPUBLIC AGAINST HOSTILE FORCES. "WITH OUR OWN PART OF THE ARMY STAFFED BY ARMENIANS, THIS WOULD NOT HAPPEN," HE SAID.

¶14. TER-PETROSAN ALSO TOLD POLOFFS THAT THE ARMENIAN SUPREME SOVIET HAD RECENTLY CREATED AN EXECUTIVE BRANCH DEFENSE COMMISSION, WHICH WOULD COORDINATE THE ACTIVITIES OF SOVIET ARMY, USSR MVD, ARMENIAN MVD, CIVIL DEFENSE, VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATION FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE ARMY AND AIR FORCE (DOSAAF), AND KGB TROOPS IN ARMENIA. TER-PETROSYAN SAID HIS GOALS WERE TO ELIMINATE ILLEGAL PARAMILITARY GROUPS, TO STRENGTHEN THE MILITIA, AND PROTECT THE REPUBLIC'S BORDERS.

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